

REMARKS

As a preliminary matter, claim 1 is objected to based on the reasons set forth at the top of page 2 of the present Office Action. Applicant amends claim 2, as indicated herein, and Applicant believes that the Examiner's objection to claim 1 is obviated.

Claims 1-17 and 19-27 are all the claims pending in the present application, claims 18, 28, and 29 having been canceled as indicated herein. Applicants thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 7, 9, 10, 12, 14-20, and 24-27 contain allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 11, 13, 23, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Purcell et al. (US Patent No. 6,227,643). Claims 4, 8, 21, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Purcell in view of Gast et al. (US Patent No. 5,583,547).

Applicant amends independent claim 1 to incorporate the allowable subject matter from claim 18, and Applicant believes that independent claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

Applicant submits that dependent claims 2-6, 8, 13, and 19-23 are patentable at least by virtue of their direct or indirect dependency from amended independent claim 1.

Claims 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 24 are amended, as indicated herein, to place these claims in independent form (including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims), and Applicant believes that these claims are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 11 and 25-27 depend from allowable claims 10 and 24, respectively.

Applicant believes these amendments should be entered, as no new matter has been added to the claims that require further search and/or consideration.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

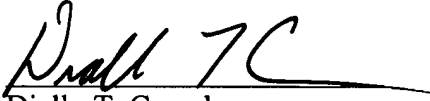
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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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